

# Tibet Information Network

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## TIN News Update

30th April 1990

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TIN News Update / London 30 April 1990

#### MARTIAL LAW LIFTED IN LHASA

The Chinese authorities announced yesterday that martial law in Lhasa would be lifted at zero hours on May 1st. Premier Li Peng was reported to have described the situation there as now stable, and the army prepared to leave the Tibetan capital after 387 days controlling its streets.

Amidst lavish ceremonies of official gratitude to the troops senior officials warned that the problem of separatism had not been solved. An unidentified official on Lhasa Television on 30th April warned that "the struggle between infiltration and anti-infiltration and between subversion and anti-subversion will not stop with the lifting of martial law." He called on all people to sustain their "fighting will" and said "we must deal with those separatist elements who might make enemies of the people and with other hostile elements with the iron fist of the people's democratic dictatorship."

Officials of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile welcomed the move, but said they would wait and see whether the decision, which they described as "a public relations exercise", would bring any real changes to conditions in Tibet.

The British Foreign Office also took a cautious tone, welcoming the decision "as a positive move in the right direction" and adding that they hoped "that the Chinese authorities will now take further steps to strengthen the protection of human rights throughout China and pursue the policies of genuine reform."

- Hardliners may gain from further unrest -

Reliable sources in Tibet reported

two weeks ago that martial law was likely to be lifted on May 1st, following strong pressure on the Lhasa authorities from Beijing. But they added that hardliners, who in early April were still fiercely opposed to lifting the year-long restrictions, may have conceded only in the hope of gaining from a likely renewed outbreak of demonstrations.

Some Tibetans fear that conservatives may use similar tactics to those which led last year to the introduction of martial law, in what may have been a bid to discredit Beijing's reformist-minded appointee in Lhasa, Party Secretary Hu Jingtao. On that occasion security forces opened fire without provocation on 40 unarmed demonstrators 25 minutes after they gathered in the city's main square. The shooting led to widespread unrest and was thought by some to have been pre-planned in order to allow the military the chance to take control of the situation.

Some observers have pointed out that, technically, for the last year developments in Lhasa have been Beijing's problem: all decisions have been taken either by the Central Government or by the Military. Ending martial law will make the local authorities responsible for any further unrest in Tibet.

For several months Tibetans have been reported to be planning further demonstrations as soon as the army is taken off the streets. In March one inhabitant of Lhasa, who asked not to be named, said, "Tibetans are no longer frightened by martial law, instead they are very angry. People have been pushed too far. One day this place will explode, and when it does it will make the protests in Tiananmen Square last year look like a picnic."

The likelihood of further unrest

has been greatly increased by renewed restrictions on religious practice in the Tibetan capital. Two weeks ago 58 monks were expelled for political activities from the three major monasteries around Lhasa, and up to 150 nuns are also believed to have been sent back to their villages. A large number of other monks walked out of the monasteries of Sera and Drepung in sympathy.

Last November the authorities imposed restrictions on some lay religious practices, including organised incense-burning, and by March were reported to have banned organised religious ceremonies in the major monasteries as well. If these restrictions remain in force after martial law is lifted further conflict can be expected.

- US trade link -

The decision to lift restrictions is related to Beijing's fears that China could lose its preferential trade entitlements with the US, which it was granted in 1979. President Bush has to decide by June 3rd whether to renew China's eligibility to receive most favoured nation status, normally only granted to capitalist countries.

On April 18th the Washington Post announced that Congress would hold hearings in May on whether to demand that China lose that status, which is linked by the 1974 Jackson-Vannick Amendment to a country's human rights practices.

Last year, in a development regarded as significant by some US observers, China won its annual re-instatement as a most favoured nation on May 31st, just 3 days before the Army began its advance into Tiananmen Square. The dispensation is seen as important by Beijing, and last week a senior Chinese official from the Ministry of Trade threatened the US with

repercussions if the special status was dropped.

- Martial law: what changes? -

The ending of martial law in Lhasa means that soldiers on the streets will be replaced by armed police. But other restrictions introduced last year are likely to remain.

These include the issuing of identity cards, and restrictions on access to the city for Tibetans from other parts of the country. 40,000 non-residents were expelled from the city or obliged to register with the authorities in March last year.

Special legislation which allows summary use of the death penalty, described by the Lhasa authorities as part of martial law provisions, has in fact been in force in China and Tibet since 1983 and will not be affected by the lifting of the current restrictions.

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Tibet Information Network / London  
April 22 1990

TENSION RISES IN TIBET: MONKS CLOSE  
DOWN MAJOR MONASTERY

Tibetan Buddhist monks have closed down one of the principal monasteries in Tibet in protest against increasing Chinese restrictions on religious practice.

According to detailed reports from Lhasa reaching London today, the monks of Sera Monastery, 3 kilometres north of the Tibetan capital, have walked out of their monastery. A large number of the 200 residents left on the morning of Thursday 19th April, locking the doors of all the temples before they left.



An eyewitness, who asked to remain anonymous, told me that he saw a notice placed by the monks at the Monastery gate which said that if any of the religious items inside the temples were damaged the authorities would be held responsible.

The notice, described as a white piece of paper about 14 inches by 18 inches, said that Tibet was an independent country which the Chinese should leave. But it also referred to Chinese interference in the running of the monasteries, and particularly to the expulsion of 3 monks accused of having nationalist opinions from Sera on 16th April.

Meanwhile a large number of monks have walked out of Drepung Monastery in sympathy with monks expelled from the monastery, 6 kilometres west of Lhasa. At a third major monastery, Ganden, 40 kilometres east of the capital, monks are said to be ready to join any protest in the capital, now entering its fourteenth month under martial law, "irrespective of the consequences".

- Religious restrictions imposed; over 200 made to leave monasteries, say reports -

Expulsions began on Monday 16th April when 37 monks were expelled from Drepung monastery. According to sources speaking directly to Tibet Information Network, an independent monitoring organisation based in London, by Tuesday 17th April 18 had been expelled from Ganden and 7 out of the 69 monks usually resident at the Jokhang, Tibet's most sacred temple, had also been expelled.

There are also unconfirmed reports that over 150 nuns were expelled last week from four nunneries near Lhasa. The nunnery of Chupsang is said to have been completely emptied, except for two care-takers, after all its 100 or so incumbents were expelled by the

authorities. 42 nuns are said to have been expelled from Chontsi or Shangsep nunnery, and 16 from Anisangkhang nunnery in Lhasa.

About half the pro-independence demonstrations in Lhasa since 1987, many of them small and unpublicised incidents, have been initiated by nuns.

The expulsions come after six months of increasing restrictions on religious practice, starting with the ban in October of the 'lha-gya' flour-throwing tradition and curtailments on the Monlam or Great Prayer Ceremony in early March. In recent weeks all religious ceremonies appear to have been banned in the major monasteries except where official permission has been granted. According to reports last week, prayers in the major monasteries are only recited by individual monks on their own.

- Monks stage mass walk-out -

On Tuesday 17th April monks at Drepung held an unofficial meeting and decided to demand that officials reverse the expulsion orders on the 37 monks. This demand seems to have been unsuccessful, and a large number of monks walked out of the monastery on 17th April in sympathy.

One eyewitness who visited Drepung after the walk-out described it as "like a graveyard" and said that only older monks too weak to travel were in evidence.

At Ganden monks are reported to have threatened to join any protest demonstration that the Drepung or Sera monks might initiate, despite the extensive military presence in the city. All meetings and gatherings are forbidden under martial law. The major monasteries have Chinese troops stationed at their gates, although the troops have been powerless to stop monks from staging walk-outs.

-Expulsions lead to further unrest-

The expulsion policy appears to have backfired badly, according to reports from the major monasteries, and may lead to unrest spreading to villages in the countryside, to which many of protesting monks will have returned last week.

Monks at Drepung, where the current wave of unrest began in 1987, were said to be "devastated" by the expulsions there. The 37 expelled from the Monastery included the senior philosophy students at the Monastery, and the monks' main hope for the future.

The Chinese began liberalisations in 1980, when monasteries were re-opened for the first time after a twenty year campaign of destruction which the Chinese themselves admit had left only 8 monasteries standing out of the 2,700 existing in Central Tibet when they took over in 1959. But there is a drastic shortage of religious teachers and philosophers in Tibet. One monk said of the expulsions last week, "Who will be the teachers? Now they are trying to kill Buddhism."

Unlike many other religions, Tibetan Buddhism is largely dependent on the vitality of its philosophical tradition for sustaining and developing its complex ritual and iconography. A lay source in Lhasa told me, "The monks regarded these students as their spiritual backbone. Now they feel their heart has been torn out."

The developments indicate a major set-back for the Chinese in Beijing, who have claimed that religious freedom has not been affected by recent political repression. It is now clear that local authorities have decided to impose severe religious restraints. This is certain to draw further attention to the Tibetans' exiled leader, the Dalai Lama. He is due

to address the Political Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, despite intense Chinese protests, in Brussels on Wednesday morning April 25th, his first ever speech to a European parliament.

- "Revolving Door" Detention Policy fails -

The decision by the authorities to expel suspected dissidents indicates a failure in their post-1987 penal policy, referred to by western human rights experts as a "revolving door policy".

The revolving door has meant holding dissidents for periods of only a few months in prison before releasing them. Almost all detainees have been held incommunicado and without charge during these months, and all report systematic use of torture and beatings during detention. Only 167 of the estimated 2-3,000 people detained since March 1989 have been brought to trial.

Most of the monks and nuns expelled are people released after between four and nine months imprisonment since 1987. Some of them have been imprisoned twice. Before release confessions or the names of political activists are usually required. The expulsions this week suggest that the prison policy has failed to curb their dissident convictions. Last December the Government began an extensive programme of political re-education and screening of all members of monasteries and Government offices. The expulsions this week suggest that a number of monks and nuns failed to respond correctly to the re-education process.

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TIN News Update / London 29 Ap 1990

# CROWD CONTROL - LHASA GOES UNDER THE BULLDOZER

Chinese authorities are demolishing part of the historic Tibetan quarter of Lhasa in order to provide better access for police and troops, according to reports from Tibet. Up to 10% of the remaining traditional Tibetan two-storey stone housing has been flattened in the last three months as the Chinese lay out new streets in the Old City.

5 large blocks of land to the north and east of the famous Jokhang Temple have been bulldozed, and streets are being relaid. Official claims that old houses were unsafe or unhygienic are regarded as an excuse by some observers, who point to chalk markings for the new road lay-out which were clearly visible in Lhasa last week.

"Roads and deep foundations in the Barkhor have been dug up, this is not just building new houses," said one eyewitness, who asked not to be named. He told me that "The police have found the narrow alleys impossible to control when there is trouble. They make it easy for people to escape and it is easy to hide from police gunfire."

Lhasa's complex maze of twisting alleyways, many barely wide enough for two people to pass, looks destined to be replaced by straight, wide streets. Wider streets will allow access for the Armed Personnel Carriers and Tanks used in the rest of the city on days when demonstrations are expected.

On three occasions since 1987 it has taken armed Chinese police more than six hours to regain control of the quarter once pro-independence protesters started throwing stones from the flat-roofed houses and from the numerous alleyways. In March 1989 the 1 kilometre square

Tibetan quarter, which surrounds the Barkhor, or 'inner circuit', was out of control for three days before the Army was brought in. The city has been under martial law ever since.

## - 1,300 Families rehoused -

At least 1,500 Tibetans from the Barkhor are estimated to be living at the moment in temporary accommodation outside the town awaiting re-location in the new houses, according to a report reaching Tibet Information Network, an independent monitoring organisation based in London.

The report confirms an official statement last August by the Chinese Government which announced investment of up to 10 million yuan (about US \$1.9 million) in 1989 for "for renovating hazardous housing in Lhasa". This is about 4% of Tibet's total fund for capital construction this year.

On December 6th 1989 an announcement by Xinhua, the official Chinese news agency, described investment in "the transformation of the old urban area of Lhasa", and referred to current work on the provision of a water supply system in the old city. 40 mln yn (about US \$6.8 mln) had already been spent over the last ten years in "upgrading rundown houses", moving 1,300 families out of "dangerous" old houses in Lhasa since 1979, said the statement.

Some of those already re-housed have complained that the new houses, which have Tibetan-style facades, are cold and unsuited to the climate because the Chinese do not use traditional Tibetan thick-walled construction methods. There was an outcry amongst Tibetans in 1988 when one house was rebuilt three storeys high, making it taller than the Jokhang Temple which lies at the heart of the Tibetan quarter.



-Tibetan Quarter Now 2% of Lhasa-

Four years ago the western side of the Barkhor was flattened to make way for the "piazzza"-style square which now allows unobstructed views of the Jokhang Temple. The new square, where this year a flagpole has been erected flying the Chinese national flag, protected by three sentries armed with AK-47s, does not only offer improved viewing facilities for tourists. It includes two police stations, now occupied by troops, and a flat-roofed 4-storey building used as a viewing station to monitor crowds around the temple and to film any protesters.

Since 1959 housing space in Lhasa has increased by a factor of 12, to 3 mln sq metres. The total urban area of Lhasa has increased to 40 sq km., making the modern city nearly twenty times larger than the 2-3 km it covered when the Chinese took over in 1959. The Tibetan part of the city has now dwindled in size to about 2% of the total area of the town, which consists mainly of modern Chinese commercial buildings and dormitory blocks. Although only 40% of the population is officially admitted to be Chinese, the shrinking size of the Tibetan quarter lends graphic support to Tibetan claims that Chinese settlers are now a majority in the city.

A source in Lhasa this week reported that a new 7-storey Bank of China has just been completed, nearly twice as tall as any other building in the city apart from the Potala, which is also undergoing extensive and unmonitored "repair works". The source confirmed earlier reports that all building work in the city outside the Tibetan quarter is done by Chinese labourers.

The efforts to rebuild the Barkhor area of Lhasa involve the use of tracked vehicles, bulldozers, and

dump trucks, rarely seen in similar sized cities in China. The exercise is remarkable given repeated warnings by the Lhasa Government in its budget last August that "we must resolutely limit non-productive investment...[and] nonproductive construction projects must be rigorously controlled." The intensity of the demolition work, as well as the fact that roads are being relaid, has increased suspicions that crowd control now dominates the Chinese approach to town planning in Tibet.

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TIN News Update / London 3 Ap 1990

UNREST SPREADS TO EASTERN TIBET:  
ARRESTS IN AMDO

Authorities in the remote Tibetan region of Ngaba are rounding up and sentencing nationalist activists in an attempt to halt the spread of political unrest, say Tibetans sources from the region who are in touch with TIN.

Two prominent businessmen have been sentenced in Ngaba to up to seven years in prison for writing posters advocating Tibetan independence, according to local sources.

One of them, 38-year old Choedak, was arrested in March 1989 but only sentenced on 22 March 1990, when he was given a seven year jail sentence. He was also accused of distributing political pamphlets which had been brought from Lhasa.

40 year-old Ha Ranggon received a two and a half year sentence, allegedly for writing posters and pasting them up around the town of Ngaba. The posters included slogans such as "Long Live the Dalai Lama" and "Tibet is Independent". Ha Ranggon is a well-known local figure is said to have been a regular guest at government meetings.

His arrest suggests that the

nationalist movement in Tibet includes significant local figures as well as monks and nuns, who led the original protests in Lhasa in 1987.

Meanwhile, a 25 year old teacher has also been arrested. Tsendak, a teacher at the Ngaba Minority High School, is due to be tried in the next few days on similar charges.

Ngaba, called Aba by the Chinese, lies on the far eastern border of the Tibetan areas now ruled by China. It is located more than 1500 kilometres east of the Tibetan capital Lhasa, but is less than 500 kilometres from the Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province. The sentences announced last month confirm reports that nationalist unrest had spread from Lhasa to the furthest parts of Tibetan territory. Last summer Tibet's Party Secretary Hu Jintao hinted for the first time that nationalist unrest existed in remote rural areas as well as in the towns.

In a successful move aimed at forestalling any further activity during the Tibetan New Year celebrations reinforcements were brought into Ngaba in January to build up the strength of the People's Liberation Army forces there. An unofficial 10pm curfew is still in force, and foreigners are prohibited from visiting this area of Sichuan province.

The authorities are also concerned about political activity in the local monastic community. With about 9,000 monks in the area around Ngaba alone, the region is regarded as politically sensitive. It includes Kirti Monastery, with 1800 monks, thought to be the largest extant Tibetan Buddhist monastery in the world. "The Chinese have always been afraid of Ngaba", said one Tibetan from the region recently. "There was fighting here in 1950 and again in the 1960s and many people were killed. They fear the strength of

our monasteries and that is why there are so many soldiers here."

Sources from Kirti Monastery say that three monks were arrested for political activity shortly after the PLA reinforcements arrived in January. Their fate is unknown. At least one other monk from Kirti has been detained without trial for over one year since he was arrested in early 1989 for writing political posters.

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#### STREET PUNISHMENT RALLY IN LHASA

A public rally was held in Lhasa just one day before the official announcement that martial law would be lifted in the city, according to a Lhasa Radio broadcast on 29th April, monitored in Dharamsala by the Tibetan Government-in-Exile.

The rally was officially described as "a worksite meeting to crush criminals". It appears to have been a form of public punishment, parading offenders in public in order to humiliate them, rather than the more usual public announcement of sentences on criminals.

The meeting, held in Dekyi-Lam (called Beijing Street by the Chinese) on 28th April, took what it called "legal action" against 43 people convicted of various crimes, including rape, causing injury, fraud, and kidnapping. No details were given about the defendants or their punishments, which are certain to have included long prison sentences.

At the meeting police officials from the Lhasa Public Security Bureau "advised the criminals to confess their crimes and gain leniency", according to the report. The prisoners appear to have been threatened with further punishment if they failed to admit that they



were guilty. Police officials warned them "that if anyone claimed ignorance and continued to indulge in criminal activities stern actions ... will be taken."

The police then made a public statement "urging the broad masses to fight criminals and anti-social elements disrupting social security and to ensure security and stability in Lhasa."

The meeting was different from other publicised procedures of this kind in that it was conducted by the police force and not by the Judiciary. This reflects the failure of the Chinese legal system, at least when it is applied in practice, to distinguish between officials that investigate crimes and officials that deal with punishment.

This separation of powers is clearly laid down as necessary in Article 135 of China's own Constitution and repeated in Article 3 of its Criminal Procedure Law, except for specific forms of punishment. Separating judicial, punitive, and investigative powers is regarded internationally as axiomatic to any system seeking to reflect standards embodied in the international rule of law..

According to a Radio Lhasa broadcast on 9 February 1990, the Police are allowed to sentence people to fines up to 100 yuan, and detention up to 15 days, without reference to any other body. The April 28th punishment rally" suggests that local police are also involved in meting out post-trial punishment.

Officials of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile commented that the rally, coming just two days before troops were moved out of the city and replaced by armed police, was probably an attempt to intimidate Tibetans in Lhasa by reminding them of police powers.

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## EUROPEAN COMMISSION SENDS TOP DELEGATION TO QINGHAI

Two days after members of the European Parliament finished their hearing on the human rights situation in Tibet, a top-level EEC delegation began the first ever EEC visit to the province of Qinghai, much of which includes the former Tibetan province of Amdo.

Six EEC countries sent their Beijing-based Ambassadors to Qinghai on 27th April, reported Xinhua on the following day. The Ambassadors of Ireland, Denmark, Luxemburg, Belgium, Portugal and Spain were received in Xining by the Deputy Governor of the Province, in what was presented as a preliminary meeting about future trade and economic co-operation between Qinghai and the European countries.

The official said Qinghai wanted to encourage co-operation with foreign countries, and hoped that the EEC would co-operate on projects to develop petrol-chemical industry, to build hydro-electric power stations, and to exploit the potential of Qinghai's salt lakes.

After the June 4th Massacres last year the EEC countries undertook in their Madrid Declaration of June 27th 1989 not to sell arms to China or to hold high level meetings with the Chinese Government, but has so far not imposed any embargo on other forms of trade.

The visit is likely to be seen by some observers as an attempt by the European Commission to soften Chinese reactions to the Brussels Hearing on Human Rights in Tibet. The Hearing, held on 24th and 25th April, was organised by the Political Affairs Committee of the Parliament, and included the Dalai Lama as its key-note speaker.

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## CHINA ADMITS TORTURE AFTER UN ASKS FOR REPORT

The Chinese authorities investigated 490 cases of torture which involved death and injuries in the first three months of 1990, according to a top Beijing official.

In his statement on 29th April Deputy Chief Procurator Lang Guoqing added that some of the cases included "serious economic losses". But he left it unclear how many of the 490 cases had actually led to the victims' deaths.

He also said that in the same period China had investigated 2,900 cases of abuses in the judicial system, which had including using bribes to pervert justice, extorting confessions by torture, and illegal detention.

According to a report from Reuters in Beijing, Lang's admission that people had died or suffered serious injuries from torture in Chinese prisons was not included in the version of his speech published in Chinese. Reuters noted that China had admitted in 1988 to 227 cases of death or injury resulting from a total of 4,700 cases of torture or illegal detention by police.

The Chinese statement came within a few hours of the United Nations demanding a full explanation of their position on torture. China was publicly humiliated on 27th April when the UN Committee on Torture asked the People's Republic to submit a special report answering torture allegations.

This came at the end of China's first cross-examination by the UN Committee since it ratified the Convention on Torture in 1988. The Committee, composed of independent experts, reviews reports submitted every 4 years by states that have signed the Convention. The Committee, who had been told by

China's official representative that allegations of torture in China and Tibet were "rumours", noted that "many questions remained largely unanswered". The Committee then asked the Chinese Government to submit an additional report to answer those questions by the end of the year.

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+ + other news + +

## UPDATE 4 ON TSETEN NORGYE

Further details have emerged about the arrest of Tseten Norgye, former book-keeper at the Banakshol Hotel, who is reported to have been tortured whilst in custody at the Chakpori Detention Centre last year.

An unconfirmed report from Tibet says he was arrested last year along with five or six other people after a visit to Sakya Monastery, 150 kilometres from Shigatse. They were later arrested back in Lhasa, apparently after an informer told police they had distributed leaflets at the Monastery.

- Informer network -

The authorities in Tibet are reported by several sources to have taken advantage of the 13 months of martial law to develop an intricate network of informers in all monasteries and workplaces in Lhasa and elsewhere. This is usually done by arresting or threatening to arrest a relative of the prospective informer if information is not supplied, and is a practice central to Chinese police methods.

Martial Law Decrees issued on March 7th 1989 specifically included the obligation for citizens to inform on each other, and promised severe penalties for any revenge or punishments inflicted on informers.

One student in Lhasa told TIN last

month, "The atmosphere here is like the Cultural Revolution. Everyone is spying on everyone else. There are little boxes where we study in which you can put your opinion of another person." The student maintained that such written accusations can lead to arrests, without a need for the informer to be directly questioned by the police.

According to a reliable source, one student at a Lhasa educational establishment was denounced for sending 1.3 yuan last May to help prodemocracy students in Beijing. The student was forced to write a letter of self-criticism stating that if everybody in China gave 1.3 yuan to the students it would be an attempt to overthrow the gov".

- Tseten Norgye: repeat of earlier information -

Other sources had reported in February that Tseten Norgye had been arrested on 23rd April 1989, together with a number of other Tibetans, when seven policemen staged a dawn raid on his house. He was held at Chakpori Prison, believed to be a detention centre run by the People's Armed Police or by the Army itself, until 17th October 1989, when he was moved to Gutsa prison.

Tseten Norgye was formally charged on November 10th 1989 for what was officially described only as "a major crime" and is believed to be still awaiting trial. Further details were given in the TIN Update of 9th March 1990.

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PRISONERS ESCAPE IN QINGHAI  
EARTHQUAKE

200 prisoners escaped from a labour camp when part of Qinghai Province was hit by an earthquake on 26th April. The epicentre was located between Gonghe and Xinghai counties in the Hainan Tibet Autonomous

Region of Qinghai.

A village, called Tanggemu by the Chinese, was destroyed, and some houses in the nearby town of Heka were damaged. Altogether 126 people were killed and 136 people were injured. 2,000 families were made homeless by the earthquake, which measured 6.9 on the Richter scale.

Chinese press reports in recent months have initiated a new policy of publicising natural disasters, apparently to show the commitment of Party officials in such situations. Xinhua reported that the local provincial Government had put aside 1 million yuan to help victims of the earthquake. The news agency added that the deputy Party Secretary and the Acting Governor of the Province together with the local armed police had "actively thrown themselves into battle against the quake".

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STERILISATION RATE GOES UP IN  
QINGHAI

On 20th April the local radio service in Qinghai announced that over 87,000 women had been sterilised in the province by the end of last year. This is nearly 4% of the province's total population, and means that approximately 10% of women of child-bearing age have had the operation.

The announcement said that family planning commissions had been set up at the grass roots level in different areas of the province to reduce the birth rate. The broadcast said that "effective and forceful measures had also been adopted to strengthen family planning work".

The number sterilised in 1989 was 2.76% higher than in the previous year, said the broadcast, monitored by the BBC Monitoring Service. It added that the population growth rate in the province had slowed down in 1989 to 1.5%.



## ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE IN LHASA

The Chinese have announced the opening of what they call an Environmental Monitoring Station in Lhasa. Xinhua reported on 22 April that the station, the first to be set up in Tibet, had been built at a cost of 3.7 mln yuan, about half a million dollars. Construction of the building began in 1984, and half of the station's 23 staff are Tibetan.

### + + Regional Reports + +

#### 1 IN 8 TIBETANS BELOW POVERTY LINE, SAYS GOVERNOR

Tibet now still has 50,000 poor families, Dorje Tsering, Chairman of the Tibetan Government, told journalists in Beijing on 30 March. He said that this meant that 250,000 people in the Tibet Autonomous Region, about one eighth of the population, did not have enough food.

He added that this was half the number of Tibetans who were living below the poverty line ten years earlier. The Beijing Government has allocated 85 million yuan to Tibet since 1979 in a special fund to help poverty.

The report conflicts with a statement issued four days earlier by Xinhua which quoted Shengchin Lobsang Damcho, a top Tibetan official in Shigatse, as saying that "with assistance from the central Government Tibet is now able to provide enough food and clothing to its people."

A week later officials in Beijing announced that the average per capital income of peasants and herdsmen in Tibet increased in 1989 to 397 yuan, approximately \$80 US. In 1988 the average rural income was given as 380 yuan. Shigatse has above average wealth, and farmers in the area immediately surrounding Shigatse had an average income of

600 yuan, according to a Xinhua report on April 9th.

Some Tibetans attribute the relative prosperity in Shigatse to a deliberate attempt to keep inhabitants there from allying with more nationalist inhabitants of Lhasa, a policy which may have been designed to encourage the traditional rivalry between the seats of Tibet's two greatest lamas. A more poetic account of Shigatse's wealth was given by another Xinhua journalist in a report issued in English. "The urban area," he wrote on 27th March, "is filled with the sounds of chanting lamas, weavers, goldsmiths, silversmiths, and cobblers toiling away. In nearby fields herdsmen quietly herd their livestock. This is today's Xigaze."

He added that the town, which is the second largest in Tibet, has an official urban population of 30,000, with another 40,000 living in the Shigatse administrative area. 700 monks live in the largest monastery in the Tibet Autonomous Region. The report said that the town is now ten times larger than it was when the Chinese took over.

- Gyantse: fear of food shortage - Shigatse and Gyantse have both been selected as "technology demonstration counties" to spread advanced farming methods in Tibet. But in Gyantse a less hopeful picture of the agricultural situation emerges from local residents there. One Tibetan there told TIN last month that in 1989 local farmers had had to sell almost all their products to the Government. He said he was afraid that this year many families would no longer have enough food for the whole year.

The district authorities in Gyantse have to fulfil a contract with the Tibetan Government in Lhasa to provide a fixed quota of barley for 1990. There is concern locally that a poor harvest would see many

people facing a food shortage as a result of having to sell all their produce to the local government.

The statements appear to reflect fears either that the Government purchasing rate is too low, or that families need to retain a surplus for their own consumption, rather than use cash to buy more at market rates. This supports evidence gathered by the leading American anthropologist Melvyn Goldstein, who has documented the persistent tendency of rural administrations in the Shigatse Prefecture to demand produce above the fixed quotas from local people at below-market prices. "If Gyantse River does not have a good crop," said one local resident, "Only those who have businesses will survive."

Business tax in Lhasa, and probably throughout Tibet, has just been increased from 3% to 5% - a jump of over 60%, and certain to cause resentment amongst urban Tibetans. No taxes have been levied on farmers or nomads since 1980, when Hu Yaobang announced a tax amnesty in the countryside by way of apology for Chinese mistakes in Tibet. This major concession is due to run out this year. There is still no sign as to whether the Government is planning to re-introduce rural taxes, politically an extremely sensitive decision.

#### GYANTSE - EMPLOYMENT PREFERENCE

One Gyantse worker has given a detailed account to TIN of one form of employment practice in the area, suggesting an unequal system of fast-track advancement for Chinese immigrants supposedly involved in low-status work in the area.

According to the source, who asked to remain anonymous, in March 1988 fifty Chinese immigrants arrived in the Gyantse area from Golmud. They had come to work on road

maintenance teams up to 50 kilometres outside the town of Gyantse. Until they arrived there were 14 Tibetans and 15 Chinese working on the maintenance team under a Chinese leader, and all 50 of the Chinese workers came as permanent staff and not on temporary placement, with all the same conditions and incentives as existing employees. A small restaurant, as well as clothing and bedding, was provided on instructions from Lhasa.

Amongst the group of 50 was the son of the head of the Road Maintenance Department. The son was transferred "very quickly" to a job in Lhasa. By March this year 48 out of the 50 new arrivals had had themselves transferred to jobs in other Government departments in Gyantse, Shigatse and Lhasa.

#### REGIONAL UNREST: ARRESTS IN SAMYE AND GYANTSE

According to a report which has just reached London, two monks were arrested last year from Samye Monastery, some 60 kilometres south of Lhasa. According to unofficial but reliable sources, Ngawang Rangdul, aged 19, from Yamdrok Yamtso, has been imprisoned in Tsedang prison since July 1989. With him is a monk, known only by his lay name of Tendar, aged 17, from Dranang in Lhoka. By March this year neither had been tried and both were still in prison.

They are being held for writing a slogan one night on the wall of a tea house situated just outside the Monastery entrance. The slogan, painted in yellow, was "Po Rangzen", which means "independence for Tibet". The monks were arrested after 15 monks at the monastery were questioned one by one by members of the Neighbourhood Committee or U Yon Lhenkhang, in their secondary role, usually kept more discreet, as a kind of unofficial police force. Committee

officials usually visit the monastery every four weeks, in principle to hold political re-education sessions.

Unlike prisoners held in Lhasa, the two monks have not been tortured and have been allowed some visitors, which may mean they have already been charged, a process which in Tibet unusually takes a minimum of three months.

There have also been reports of a demonstration in Tsedang last year by six monks from Sangna Sangkhyen Monastery. Last December Reuters reported that protests had taken place in Tsedang, 170 kilometres south-east from Lhasa, but no further details are available.

There are unconfirmed reports that two monks were arrested from Tashilhunpo monastery in Shigatse, where a few pro-independence posters did appear last year.

- Gyantse: students banned from Monastery after posters go up -

In Gyantse, 250 kilometres south-west of Lhasa, two monks, whose names are not known, were arrested from Gyantse Choede shortly after Martial Law was declared in Lhasa. According to a reliable source, nationalist posters had been placed on almost every building.

Many of the posters, which included the slogans "Independence for Tibet" and "Chinese Go Home", were said to have been posted by students from the local middle school.

As a result all students' parents were called to the school and were instructed to stop this activity. Since then school students have been forbidden to visit the local monastery, where monks are suspected of influencing their political ideas. Posters also appeared in another area of Gyantse

and, according to another unconfirmed report, one monk is said to have been arrested from Chakra Monastery for putting up posters.

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+ + Special reports + +

TIN News Update / 26 Ap 1990 / Brussels

DALAI LAMA AT EP: MEETS BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

In what is believed to be his first top-level meeting with an EEC armed Government official, the Dalai Lama had a 40-minute meeting with the Belgian Minister for External Affairs on Tuesday April 24th.

At a press conference on Wednesday 25 April the Dalai Lama, invited to Brussels to address the European Parliament's Hearing on Human Rights in Tibet, confirmed that he had met Minister Eyskens, but did not elaborate on their discussions. The meeting was officially described as private although it took place at the Foreign Ministry in Rue des Quatre-Bras in Brussels.

The Chinese Government are certain to treat the meeting as a political incident. It represents a major setback in their attempts to curtail growing support in Europe for the Tibetan cause.

Last year Beijing issued a strongly-worded statement which indicated that even private meetings with the Dalai Lama would be regarded as political interference in China's affairs. The statement, issued on April 21st 1989, said that if officials of a foreign Government met with the Dalai Lama "in any capacity, they would be considered to be committing an act unfriendly to China".



The conference had brought together academics from all over the world for the first time to discuss the history, sociology, politics and art of Tibet since 1950. The conference was attended by some 80 people, including representatives from several Governments.

- end -

TIN / Conference Report / London  
10th April 1990 / ref:aca3p

#### CONFERENCE REPORT: "40 YEARS ON"

The first-ever conference on modern Tibetan studies, "40 Years On: Tibet 1950-1990", hosted by the Central Asian Studies Association at SOAS, involved speakers from ten countries including Tibet, China, and India as well as from Europe and America. Over two days they marked out the future dimensions of modern Tibetan studies, focussing on the study of political history, social anthropology, cultural and religious developments, contemporary art, and economic development.

Tibet, seen in western universities primarily as a subject for religious or textual study, has received little attention from social scientists, even amongst sinologists, and few scholars have studied the current situation there. The conference, in bringing together social scientists and classical Tibetologists from both sides of the ideological divide, sought to apply for the first time modern methodological tools to the study of Tibet.

For an area until now bedevilled by restrictions on access and by propaganda considerations, the standard of scholarship was extremely high. Speakers and discussants acknowledged the lack of first-hand material, but nevertheless provided a large quantity of previously undocumented

information, with nine of the sixteen speakers presenting papers based largely on their own, often unofficial, fieldwork in Tibet.

#### - Debate over Economic Reforms -

Western scholars generally agreed that the reform policies of the early 1980s had brought some improvements to Tibet, and Melvyn Goldstein of Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, the leading western expert on contemporary Tibet, described improving conditions amongst nomads with whom he had lived in Northern Tibet, as well as their ability to recreate their traditional culture once Government restrictions had been lifted.

A wider view of China's economic development policies towards all its western regions was given by geographer Terry Cannon from Holland, who characterised them as a form of economic colonialism, reflecting China's continuing Imperial traditions.

#### - Protest Movement Analysed -

Three speakers analysed the current political situation. Canadian sociologist Ronald Schwartz from Newfoundland University, who spent several months in Lhasa in 1988, argued that the anti-splittist campaign of that year had actually heightened political consciousness amongst Tibetans in the city. This view was substantiated by Tibetologist Professor Eliot Sperling from Indiana, who used recent Tibetan political pamphlets to illustrate a coherent intellectual body of thought and discussion in Lhasa behind the Tibetan demands for independence, noting in particular the pamphleteers' rejection of what they described as pre-1950 feudalism.

Hanna Hanevik, a researcher from Norway, provided an anthropological

explanation for the extensive involvement of Tibetan nuns in recent political protest, partly ascribing it to their low social position not only under current Chinese rule but in the traditional Tibetan religious hierarchy as well.

Other scholars studied the impact of the Chinese presence in Tibet in terms of their own subject areas. Tsering Shakya, a Tibetan historian studying in London and a co-convenor of the Conference, analysed the difficulties faced by the Chinese in translating their political vocabulary into Tibetan, and suggested that as a result some political concepts had acquired quite different meanings for Tibetans.

Tibetologist Samten Karmay from the University of Paris produced a detailed study of pre-Buddhist mountain god rituals still current in both the Tibetan Autonomous Region and in Eastern Tibetan areas, indicating the existence of a unified cross-border sense of ethnic identity.

In a semiotic analysis of modern paintings from Sichuan, Per Kvaerne, Professor of Religious History at Oslo University, illustrated the adaptation of traditional Tibetan thangka art to the demands of the prevailing ideology. Heather Stoddard, head of the Tibetan Department at the Institut National des Langues Orientales in Paris, discussed the relationship between Tibetan publications and national identity.

Historical studies included a comprehensive account by Premen Addy on Indo-British strategic conceptions of Tibet, together with a vivid account by leading Tibetan writer Jamyang Norbu, based on his own research amongst retired participants, of American involvement in the Tibetan resistance movement in the 1950s.

Tsering Wangyal, the leading Tibetan journalist and editor, contributed an important and detailed description of Sino-Tibetan negotiations since 1970. Warren Smith, of the Fletcher School of International Relations in Boston, discussed developments in Chinese nationality policy which focussed on Mao's abandonment of the Leninist right to secession.

#### - Policy and Politicisation -

Central to the conference was the assessment of China's post-1980 reform policies in Tibet, and the crisis of identity faced by Tibetans under Chinese rule. But behind the discussions, and beyond the remit of the western scholars, was the question of whether the reforms will continue or be replaced by more conservative policies. Both economist Wang Xiaogiang and Tibetologist Wang Yao submitted papers which some observers felt to be strong if veiled pleas for their Government to continue relaxed policies in Tibet.

Much of the general discussion centred on the question of the politicisation of Tibetan studies, and the issue was frankly debated, despite some occasionally passionate interventions from the floor. Goldstein's argument against what he called the factoid - the acceptance of opinion or rumour as truth - will place pressure on students of contemporary Tibet from now on to provide a clearly researched historical basis for their terms of reference and language as well as for their own hypotheses.

The conference, convened by Tsering Shakya and by Dr Shirin Akiner of the Central Asian Studies Association, and co-ordinated by Robert Barnett of the Tibet Information Network, included important exhibitions of recent photographs from Tibet, as well as

the first print-out of a computer-generated map of Tibet by British cartographer Michael Farmer. The proceedings of the conference are expected to be published within the year.

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#### ARCHIVE NOTES:

Note on China's Religious Policies in Tibet.

Much of China's sense of its failures in Tibet is focussed on the mistakes of the Cultural Revolution. It has been argued, however, that China's anti-religious policies came into force in Tibet much earlier. Tsewang Norbu, from Petra Kelly's office on Berlin, has kindly supplied TIN with a verbatim account of a Press conference held in Lhasa on 18th July 1987 with German Premier Helmut Kohl, as reported by German newspapers.

At the press conference Buchung Tsering, a vice-Chairman of the TAR Government, said that in 1959 there were 2,700 temples and monasteries in what is now called the Tibet Autonomous Region. There were also 114,000 monks and 1,600 'living Buddhas'. In 1966, as a result of the introduction in 1959 of the Democratic reforms, there were 550 temples and monasteries and 6,900 monks. Buchung Tsering went on to say that following the 'chaos' of the Cultural Revolution, there were by 1978 only 8 Monasteries and 970 monks left.

This can be summarised as follows:

Year	No. monasteries, &c
1959	2,700
1966	550
1978	8

Year	No. monks, &c
1959	115,600
1966	6,900
1978	970

This means approx 80% of monasteries were closed in the first 7 years after the Chinese took over the running of Tibet, before the Cultural Revolution., and the remaining 19.64% went in the next four to 12 years. In all, it means that 99.6% were closed or destroyed within the first 19 years under Chinese rule, probably within the first ten years.

Less than 1% of the monks were left by 1978, and by 1966 already 93.5% of the monks had gone.

Even more importantly, these figures show that in 1959 the monastic population of Tibet was not as high as 20%, the figure often suggested. It was much closer to 10%, or even less.

- end -

TIN News Update  
30th April 1990



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